

California Department of Water Resources



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State Water Project Adjusts Estimates for 2001 Water Deliveries

SACRAMENTO---The California Department of Water Resources today issued a tentative estimate that the State Water Project will deliver about 824,000 acre-feet during calendar 2001. This equates to a 20 percent allocation to most of the agencies receiving SWP water.

This conservative estimate is based on the current reservoir storage and hydrologic conditions affecting watersheds serving the State Water Project. The SWP provides a supplemental water supply to 29 public agencies in California, meeting at least part of the water needs of about 20 million Californians and helping to irrigate about 600,000 acres of farmland.

Moderate rainfall and Sierra snowpack are cited among factors considered for the delivery estimate. SWP delivery approvals are based on the amount of water in SWP storage reservoirs, a conservative projection of runoff for the remainder of 2001, contractor requests and SWP operation constraints.

The Department of Water Resources, which planned, built and operates the State Water Project, annually issues a series of allocation estimates, starting with conservative estimates early in winter. Estimates are subject to change during the winter and spring as more rainfall and snowpack data becomes available.

DWR will conduct its next Sierra snow survey on Friday, Feb. 2. The Department conducts five monthly snow surveys each winter and spring to assess snow conditions and make estimates about snowmelt runoff and future water supply.

During the last six years, watersheds feeding the SWP have experienced heavy precipitation which resulted in high volumes of water delivery through the SWP. Deliveries in wet years typically range around 3 million acre-feet.

The current delivery projection approximates 20 percent of the amount requested by SWP Contractors. Reflecting fairly dry weather conditions in January, this represents a downward adjustment from the initial allocation projection of 40 percent issued earlier this winter.

An acre-foot of water contains 326,600 gallons and is often described as the amount of water needed to serve the needs of five people for a year.

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

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